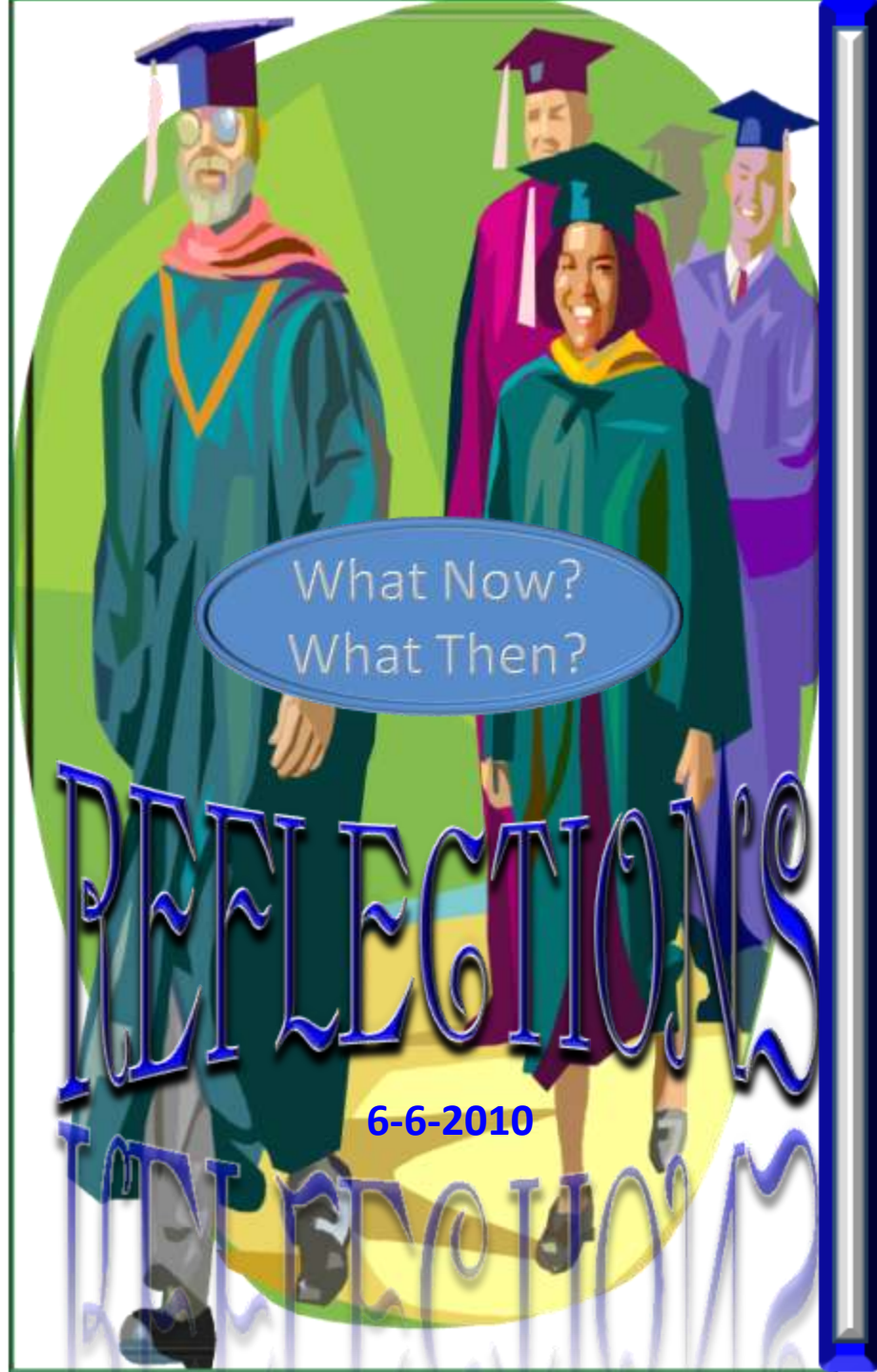


Sermon Notes



What Now?
What Then?

REFLECTIONS

6-6-2010



Reflections

One of my favorite times of the school year as a principal, was the graduation ceremony for the seniors and the weeks leading up to this special event. The kids had spent much of their senior year worrying about credits, final exams, scholarship applications and a myriad of other concerns, all focused toward the moment when their name is called and their diploma is given to them. The days leading up to the commencement ceremony include rehearsals, acquiring tickets for the grads family and other time-consuming activities all of which create a very hectic few weeks. Staff worries about behavior of students who are no longer under their complete control, occupy the thoughts of the adults who will supervise commencement, and taken together there is enough stress for each person to fill their concern quota. In spite of all this, the ceremony eventually goes off in fine fashion, always with a few “tricks” from the kids, and everyone emerges from the event happy and congratulatory to each of the now graduated young adults and their relieved parents. Whew!

When all the hoopla is completed and the senior celebrations eventually end, then the new graduates wake up a day or two later to face a powerful question. **What now?** It is now time for a reality check. The protection of family and friends will begin to wane a bit as the graduate has to face the real world for their first “solo flight”. It is sobering and a little frightening. So graduates: What now? Are your plans in place for the next step in your life? Do you know, or think you know, the what, when, where, and how of the next few months and years of your life? Kind of scary isn't it? Well, be of good cheer, you're not alone. Most of us old folks faced the same dilemma and even the paths we started to take led to outcomes that we wouldn't have dreamed of or planned for. It doesn't, however, mean that you don't plan, it just means that our lives don't always turn out as we would like. You see, only God knows the future and the challenges we will face and this is why we must always seek His guidance for each step of our lives. Wisdom calls on us to make God's plans for us our plans for us.

The Bible tells us how life unfolds for those who become God's children. ⁹ [A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.](#)

(Proverbs 16:9 NKJ) So before you begin to walk according to your plan, it is important to first evaluate your future possibilities by seeking God's guidance and wisdom both for each day and for the future as well. God may place a call on your life to go a completely different direction than you would have planned for yourself. Are you, as one of His disciples, ready to be obedient to His direction in your life? What if your life includes suffering, are you in a relationship with God that is deep enough to weather such storms without damage to your faith? What if you're blessed with great wealth, are you prepared to serve God with such blessing? So many possibilities, so many potential outcomes, so much that is uncertain, all of which must lead us to say like Joshua of old: [choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve,...But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.](#)" (Joshua 24:15 a, 24b:15 NKJ)

We as your church family will be praying for you as you wonder about your future and as you take those first steps into what lies ahead. We pray that your journey will be blessed by God's grace and mercy, filled with the joy of your salvation, and full of God's wisdom when you face circumstances too large to see around.

I realize that in a small church body such as ours that we have just a handful of graduates in any given year and, as a result, we may find ourselves dismissing this little tome as not pertaining to us who have long ago graduated not only from high school, but for many, from college as well, and that our careers have been established or even completed. **But wait!** Each of us has yet another graduation to face when we will end this life in that final commencement event, our death. What then? You see, the question is only slightly different than when we long ago left school and asked, what now? Let's then consider our advice to the current graduates from high school and even college. Is our relationship with God deep enough to weather the storms of life? Do we still ask God's direction for our daily walk? Have we been good stewards of His blessings? Have we committed our lives to be obedient disciples today or this week as well as in the years we may have left? Taking our own advice is not always as easy as giving it to someone else, but we must be the examples of faith that our children need to see in order for them to walk in confidence as God's children. Well graduates, both young and old, are you ready to face the future? By God's grace may you pursue His purpose for your life and its future and walk both in wisdom and in joy. **Pastor Doug**